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Three charged for illegal dumping

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In an unusual case, three men face criminal charges as a result of lead contamination found last year at a West Chester Township landfill.

John Grinstead and his business partner, Larry Lough, are named in a Butler County indictment released Wednesday, along with a man connected to the landfill, Ray A. Skinner II.

All three are accused of hazardous-waste-law violations. In addition, Skinner also faces three drug charges apparently unrelated to the environmental case.

The county prosecutor's office is handling the drug charges while the environmental case is being brought by the Ohio Attorney General's Office.

A spokesman for the attorney general, Ted Hart, said Grinstead and Lough ran a Fairfield-based business called Tri-E Technologies, which aimed to recycle lead-containing computer screens. But when their business failed, the men were stuck with tons of broken lead-containing glass, which they allegedly disposed of at the Skinner landfill — the site of an emergency cleanup by a federal agency last year.

Hart said state environmental officials reported finding 131 tons of the lead-containing glass on the property, which is located on a ridge above the east fork of Mill Creek. Authorities found soil contamination, prompting the emergency cleanup to prevent water contamination.

The indictment says Grinstead and Tri-E Technologies failed to prepare required documents about the hazardous waste; that Grinstead, Lough and their company illegally transported hazardous waste; and that Grinstead, Skinner and the company illegally disposed of hazardous waste. Skinner is accused of illegal storage of hazardous waste. was done.

In addition, all three men and the company are accused of misdemeanor criminal endangering charges.

The 10-acre Skinner Landfill, operated on a 78-acre site, accepted municipal, industrial, construction and commercial waste from the late 1950s until authorities closed it in July 1990 because of concerns about toxic wastes that were dumped there. The site underwent an extensive, years-long cleanup.

At the time of the emergency Tri-E lead cleanup last year, Skinner family members told the Enquirer that materials were dumped on the land without their permission or knowledge — and that they had alerted environmental officials about the Tri-E materials after discovering them.